

Amendments to the Abstract:

A ~~radio telecommunications system is provided operative~~ to communicate digital data symbols with higher than ~~quadrature phase shift keying (QPSK)~~ modulation. ~~The system comprises~~ a transmitter (1) and a receiver (2). The transmitter (1) comprises a modulator (d) and means (a, b, c, e) to split and encode the data into a first block of more significant bits of symbols and a second block of less significant bits of the symbols for modulating by the modulator (d). The receiver (2) ~~is operative to~~ receives digital data bits by iterative determination of soft estimates of bits followed by a hard decision as to what bit was intended. ~~The receiver (2) and~~ comprises a first processor (3) ~~operative to~~ provide first soft estimates of bits of the received signal, and a second processor (13) ~~operative to~~ decode the first soft estimates and to provide second soft estimates of the bits. The receiver (2) also comprises a first combiner (11') ~~operative to~~ provide adapted first soft estimates to the second processor (13), the adapted first soft estimates of each bit being dependent upon the respective first soft estimate and a respective previous first soft estimate. ~~The receiver (2) also comprises, and~~ a second combiner (17) ~~operative to~~ provide third soft estimates back to the first processor for subsequent further decoding, the third soft estimates of each bit being dependent upon the respective second soft estimate and a respective previous second soft estimate.